

Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.
IRONTON, MISSOURI

THE FAT MAN SAVED THEM.

Story of a Party of Pioneers Who All But Perished on the Plains.

Col. Alexander Majors, a western pioneer of fifty years' experience, probably knows more about the west and its development than any other living man. Having spent all his life in the west he has seen it grow from a wilderness into the highly-developed and thickly-populated country it is today.

In 1823 Col. Majors, then a lad of ten years, was living with his father in Jackson county, Mo., on a farm which is now the site of Kansas City. Then this country was the frontier, and there were only a few farmhouses where now stands the great city. Twelve miles away was Independence, the farthest frontier town.

"In the spring of '23," said Col. Majors, "a farmer living near us named James Cockrell, an uncle of Senator Cockrell, started out to cross the plains for the Rocky mountains, where he hoped to catch enough beaver in the mountain streams to bring in a little cash, which was extremely scarce in those days. Cockrell was about thirty years old. At the end of that time he returned with enough beaver skins to bring him \$1,400. Cockrell also brought back a wealthy silver-mine secret. He had discovered what he supposed to be a wonderful silver mine. He organized a party to return, seek out the treasure and bring back loads of untold wealth.

"My father, Benjamin Majors, was among the twenty farmers who joined the expedition and set out for the Rockies. After a long, weary journey the mountains were reached and a few days' search discovered the mine.

"All the pack-horses were loaded with the precious ore and the miners started on the return journey. The first two or three hundred miles of the return trip lay through country swarming with Indians and buffalo. Every night several of the party were left on guard to see that the Indians did not get away with our horses.

"One night when they had just arrived at the western border of Kansas, four hundred miles from home, the Indians sneaked upon them. A lot of them crawled along on the ground and so stealthily did the Indians that they were in the middle of the camp. Such whooping and yelling was never heard, but before the campers were wide awake the Indians were off, having stampeded every horse, both pack and saddle.

"The travelers were left in a terrible state. They were four hundred miles from home, without a horse, and their clothes and shoes were almost in shreds from mountain usage, there was nothing to eat and nothing to cook with. All they possessed was their guns, ammunition and blankets, under which they were sleeping. They had no provisions whatever, and it was four hundred miles to the nearest town. It was a terrible situation, but they bravely set out. There was one man in the party named Clark Davis, who weighed two hundred and seventy-five pounds. His flesh was an awful burden to carry. It seemed as though they would have to leave him on the plains to perish. His clothes rubbed the skin from his back and his feet became so swollen he could scarcely walk. He could not keep up in the march, and someone would have to remain behind and bring him as fast as he could travel. And the two would trudge into camp long after the others had stopped for the night.

"At first they managed to live very well. There was plenty of buffalo and the pioneers shot enough to furnish plenty of meat. They roasted the meat in the fire, but had to eat it without the luxury of salt or other seasoning. But finally even the buffalo became scarce and finally disappeared altogether. Meanwhile the fat man had improved vastly. He had become used to the hardship of all day tramping and he could keep up with the procession. Scarier grew the game and a new fear grew daily on the unfortunate men—the fear of starvation increased every day. Then it was that the fat man's adipose tissue came to his rescue. It was a reservoir of reserve force, supporting him while the others were starving. And the fat which the rest had once believed would cause his death proved the salvation of the whole party.

"They were now fearfully reduced, and emaciated. They lived on roots and any little prairie animals they could catch. At last the fat man, after again, but was able to go no farther. Davis took up his gun and said he would never come back until he had caught something. In a few moments two shots brought glad tidings. Davis had killed two deer and so ravenous were the poor men that they devoured parts of the animals raw. From this food supply they obtained enough strength to finish their journey.

"Many a day for years I heard them recount the perils and hardships of this never-to-be-forgotten journey."—Chicago News.

Pictures in Stones.

Shakespeare could "find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything," but he fails to mention the possibility of finding a picture drawn by nature in a stone. In several of the ancient as well as modern scientific journals we read of lines and markings in certain stone formations, particularly agates, which bear striking resemblances to the outlines of men, animals, landscapes, etc. One of these is now preserved in the museum of the Vatican is a perfect likeness of a crowned king. Many of the representations are so lifelike that they have been mistaken for medallion portraits! We read accounts of several of these wonders in Albertus. One plainly shows a man in the attitude of running; another is a perfect figure of the good St. Jerome, but the most remarkable of all is an agate containing a representation of Apollo surrounded by the Nine Muses. The Bresford House collection in the South Kensington Museum, London, contains scores of these curious picture stones.—St. Louis Republic.

Fatal Use of Language.

He—Death me, don't you know, Miss Sweetheart, that when the electric car struck me it knocked me silly? She—Poor fellow, and you have never recovered from it.—Detroit Free Press.



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CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.

Even in the midst of his annoyance North found time to make a mental note of the new fact that Wymer's words had elicited.

"So I am the opposing candidate for city attorney," he said to himself, accepting with a half-satirical surprise the honor that was thus thrust upon him. "Actually dabbling in local politics; I never supposed that I could descend to that!"

Mr. Wymer's brief enthusiasm passing off, he relapsed again into a state of harmless and peaceful imbecility; and North thought that his moment of escape had come.

But in this he was cruelly disappointed. No sooner had he turned away than Wymer started up again, exclaiming with all the enthusiasm of a new inspiration:

"I shay, North, hold on; jush lemme speak 't' you!"

"Speak to me, then, and have done with it!" cried North, desperately.

"North—you're drunk!" asserted Mr. Wymer, with startling emphasis, as he steadied himself against the lamp-post and blinked sternly at North. "You're drunk, sir, drunk. D'y' hear? You'll never do for city 'torney; oh, no! Take 'em home, boys," he added, waving his hand unsteadily toward several gentlemen who had congregated on the corner. "Told 'em er truth. Don't like to have er truth told 'im. Take him home, I shay. His own mother wouldn't know him now; he's drunk!"

Upon this appeal one of the gentlemen stepped forward quickly and took North's arm, with the words:

"I think you'd better let me take you home, North. Mr. Wymer will feel better satisfied if you do. Come on, old fellow," he added, drawing North aside and speaking confidentially. "It's the shortest way to get rid of Wymer. He's just in a condition to be troublesome. If you can escape from him in this way, you'd better do it."

North assented and started slowly down the street with his arm linked in that of his friendly companion; but he was not destined yet to escape. Wymer, who had been waiting for a moment in a slightly bewildered way, then suddenly started to follow them at a creditable pace; creditable only in point of speed, for he described all sorts of variations from the straight line of direction in his hurried course, while his voice was still heard above every other sound in the street.

"Sawful shad!" he exclaimed, very nearly upsetting himself in his vehement efforts to extract a silk handkerchief from his pocket, with the obvious intention of wiping imaginary tears of grief. "Young man or North's talen's throwin' shawf away like this! Turble warnin', young men. Drink did it. D'y' hear? Steady there, now, steady! Hooraay! Here we go!"

Mr. Wymer's mood became slightly hilarious at this point, and, catching his hat in his hand, he swung it gleefully around his head, while he continued to cheer uproariously.

This was beyond endurance. Flailing sharply, North had just turned to signal a policeman half a square distant, who, with that disinclination to active duty that seemed to pervade the whole local force, had been witnessing this scene without any thought, apparently, beyond his own idle amusement, when two young men, passing on the opposite side of the street, caught sight of Wymer, divined the state of affairs, and came hurrying up to interfere.

They took forcible possession of Mr. Wymer, notwithstanding his manful resistance, and by their united powers of command and persuasion succeeded in leading him away.

North and his new friend watched the interesting trio until they turned a corner and disappeared, then they continued their own walk down the street.

"Mr. Wymer's friends were evidently discontented on finding that he was making such a spectacle of himself," remarked North, as he recalled the glances of chagrin that the young men had exchanged.

"Why, yes; they see that he is ruining his chances for election. Every one in X—knows that Jack Wymer is



SWINGING IT GLEEFULLY ABOUT HIS HEAD.

a dissipated fellow, but this is the first time for weeks that he has been seen on the streets 'elevated' in the daytime. They have kept a close watch over him during the canvass; what have released their vigilance a little to-day. Oh, they're a hard lot, that whole 'Labor Party,' as they call themselves—a hard lot!" added North's companion, shaking his head dubiously. "Of course, old Wymer's money is the backbone of the concern; everyone knows that he got up this movement just to foist his promising son into office. Couldn't run on any regular ticket, you see. Works 'em up, friends, indeed! Why, the party leaders are nothing in the world but a set of worthless demagogues without a thimbleful of brains among them; and as to all their fine talk about being the poor man's friends and looking out for the interests of labor versus capital, it's just so much trash and twaddle. I can't see that the movement is making any headway at all; can you?"

"Well, it is difficult to judge," returned North, with the wise non-committal air eminently becoming his ignorance on the subject. "These things often turn out in a very unexpected

way, you know. In fact, it may be said prominently of politics, 'that it is all unfair for him to throw me over in this unexpected way.' By Jove! I'll tell him what I think of this unbrotherly conduct when I see him again. And I can tell him something else, and will interest him quite as much, perhaps—that there hasn't been a day in the last six years when Uncle Dick wouldn't have given his right hand to make up his quarrel with Noll and receive him back into full favor again, if only Noll should make the first advances. How I should like to see the dear old fellow again! This Cervantes brings him up so vividly, to think that he should still keep it about him! It must be for the sake of old associations. There is so like Noll!"

While these thoughts were passing through his mind North had taken up the book again, and he was now slowly turning the pages, pausing occasionally to read some marked passage or marginal note scrawled in pencil.

As he did so a folded paper fluttered from between the leaves and fell to the floor. North picked up the paper and unfolded it. It was a telegram addressed to Olin North. Before he was conscious of what he was doing Allan North had read these words:

"Will prove to be a forgery. Who is responsible for this? We look to yourself and Mrs. Maynard for explanation. Send for Mr. Dinkirk's niece who will be prosecuted. Also an investigation of this forgery. Let us hear from you soon."

It would be impossible to give any adequate description of North's state of mind as he read this message, while its startling significance slowly penetrated through the first dazed wonder that it created. By degrees a clear and definite idea shaped itself in his mind.

"Well," he exclaimed aloud, "if this isn't the most remarkable coincidence I ever heard of! And it plunges me deeper than ever into embarrassment. Mrs. Maynard—surely that is the name; why did it not occur to me at once? Mrs. Maynard, represented in court by Hopkins and Shepherd, of New York, is the claimant in the Dinkirk will case, yet which my partners, Hunter and Ketchum, appear as executors and solicitors of the estate. I, who have previously had no connection with the case, come here to X—as the representative of Hunter and Ketchum, to investigate a claim which they hope may lead to the discovery of an impostor, the sole heir at law, and behold, I am mistaken by the claimant for her own lawyer! Could such a combination of circumstances occur more than once in a hundred years?"

Once more he took up the telegram and read it. In his first hasty perusal he had overlooked one point which he now remembered. It was the name of the person who was thinking now brought out with startling prominence. "We look to yourself and Mrs. Maynard"—he read the sentence aloud in a puzzled way—"for explanations. What does this mean? Can it be possible that they suspect—Good heavens! It all flashes upon me now! Why was I so blind as not to see it before?"

Dashing the telegram down on the desk, he rose to his feet with his face grown suddenly white, and commenced to pace rapidly to and fro.

Mrs. Maynard, the claimant, Olin North, her confidential legal adviser. What had been his own previous suspicion concerning this? Only too well did he remember it now, and he saw it plainly reflected in that message of Hopkins and Shepherd. In a swift rush of thought Allan North reviewed all the incidents of the case that had first led to his suspicion; he took up one by one the various links which, though slight and insignificant in themselves, yet which my partners, Hunter and Ketchum, had so skillfully united to form a complete chain of damning evidence; and by the time this swift review was finished he had surrendered most reluctantly to the belief that seemed to be irresistibly forced upon him.

"Can it be possible," he asked himself, still in a maze of bewildered doubt, "that an unwitting co-operation, this Noll has so far forgotten his personal and professional honor as to descend to such a deed as this? There is only one hypothesis upon which I can explain it at all. He must have been made—infatuated! A beautiful face has lured many a man to his ruin, and Noll has undoubtedly been the victim of such a lure. What was it? The beautiful face of Mrs. Maynard? Or was it the beautiful face of the woman who had been lured to her ruin by the beautiful face of Mrs. Maynard?"

There was a pitiless anger in North's heart as he spoke these words. He felt as though he were a puppet, a plaything, a mere tool in the hands of a malicious power. He felt as though he were a man who had been deceived, and he felt as though he were a man who had been deceived.

He looked at the telegram and looked at the picture of Mrs. Maynard which he had seen in the newspaper. He looked at the picture of Mrs. Maynard which he had seen in the newspaper. He looked at the picture of Mrs. Maynard which he had seen in the newspaper.

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PITH AND POINT.

—Van Braam—"What quiet eyes Miss Manchester has!" Shindies—"Yes; so widely different from her chin!"—Pittsburgh Chronicle.

—How is it that Jenkins' baby cured him of drinking? "Because every time he went home tipsy he thought he saw twins."—Inter-Ocean.

—Huntin' pleasure in riches is a good deal like blowin' down the muzzle of a gun; a feller never finds out it's loaded 'til it's too late.—Ram's Horn.

—He—"I've bought you a pet monkey to amuse you, darling." She—"O, how kind of you! Now I shan't miss you when you're away."—Pick Me Up.

—Locally Effective.—Smythe—"Was your Baltimore heater a success last winter?" Tompkins—"Oh, yes; I've no doubt it was warm in Baltimore."—Puck.

—"I ain't much at the planny," said the coal-yard employe as he adjusted the weight of a load of coal, "but I'm great at ruinin' the scales."—Washington Star.

—Proof of Marriage—"I overheard Charlie and Lil quarreling this morning." "By Jove! Then the story of your secret marriage must be true."—Detroit Tribune.

—"Is Tomkins familiar with Shakespeare, I—?" "Well I should say so. He brought back my copy with one cover torn off and the other marked up."—Inter-Ocean.

—Nurse—"Oh, baby, you are naughty. You must make me wish there were no babies." Mamma (aged six)—"Well, then it would be lovely; there would be no nurses!"—Tit-Bits.

—Mistress—"I should like to know what business that policeman has in my kitchen every night in the week?" Cook—"Please, mum, I think he's suspicious of my neglectin' me work or somethin'."—Demorest's Magazine.

—Miss Hart—"Which do you think is usually the sillier—the bride or the groom?" Mr. Oldbath—"The groom, of course. That's how he happens to be a groom.—Indianapolis Journal.

—He (gazing at her jewelless ears during a temporary lull in the conversation)—"Why? did you never have your ears bored?" She—"Never, up to the present time."—Boston Transcript.

—Ayesha.—Miss Twitter—"Mr. Snec has a habit of referring to his wife as 'She.'" Mrs. Dogood—"Only an abbreviation." Miss Twitter—"For what?" Mrs. Dogood—"She who must be obeyed."—Truth.

—But Flowers Are Expensive.—"Do you know anything about the language of flowers?" he asked. "I don't believe flowers have any language at all," replied his friend, who was thinking of his best bouquet girl. "Why?" Because they say talk is cheap."—Washington Star.

—A cow that gives black milk is the eighth wonder of the world. The animal belongs to Robert Hansborough, of Chillicothe, O. The butter made from the milk of this cow is of the color of black tea. Six calves have been reared by Hansborough's cow, and they thrive well on the black milk.

—Grocer—"What have you been doing in the cellar so long?" Grocer's Apprentice—"I have been cleaning out the molasses measure. It was so clogged up that it didn't hold more'n half a quart." Grocer—"Oh, that's what you've been doing! Well, you take your hat and go home and tell your father to send you to the theological school. You ain't fitted for the grocery business."

A TOUGH GOOSE STORY.

But the Western Woman, Who Had Also Seen Queer Things, Believed It.

She was a western woman and had been entertaining a room full of guests in an up-town hotel with some extraordinary tales.

She had just finished one particularly wild and woolly border romance, when a young southerner present drawled: "Madam, if anyone else in the world had told that story I should have been compelled to doubt it, but, of course, I can not refuse to believe you."

"Now," he continued, as if by way of retaliation, "you can not fail to appreciate a most unusual occurrence in my state. The past winter, as you know, has been unusually severe in the south. Well, in November, when the wild geese were flying past us, a flock of them stopped to drink in one of our Carolina ponds."

"Being so much pleased with the water they lollered for a day or two. But one time while they were paddling around a sudden cold wave swooped down without any warning. A crust of ice formed over the pond in less than a minute, and there were the geese stuck as fast as if they had been nailed to a board."

"For several days the geese—here he spoke these words with a flutter and squawked trying to explicate themselves, but to no purpose. The people in the neighborhood watched their struggles with more or less curiosity, and finally a mountaineer and his wife ventured on the ice to capture some of the game."

"The geese made one tremendous effort in unison, and lifted the whole sheet of ice into the air, slowly flying away with it. Slowly the ice floe ascended until it became a mere speck in the sky and finally disappeared altogether. The neighbors are now watching every day when the weather moderates to see the old man's wife drop from the clouds."

The western woman looked up at the speaker and remarked: "Well, that certainly does seem incredible, but I don't doubt it, for I've seen too many queer things myself."—N. Y. Herald.

A Paradise of Flowers.

The Scilly islands have in the last few years been made a paradise of flowers, and flowers are now almost the sole business of the inhabitants.

The crop of narcissi this year was enormous. As many as twenty-seven tons of these flowers were shipped to the London market in one day.

The distance from the islands to London is three hundred and twenty-eight miles. The flowers are all shipped by steamer from one port in the island of St. Mary's. The flowers are brought from the numberless little islets to St. Mary's by sailboats, and it is an interesting sight to see, in the early morning, the dozens of these little craft with their cargoes of dainty blossoms battling the rough waters that beat among the rugged islets, on their way to the steamer.—N. Y. Sun.

Defining His Status.

"You're a friend of the Spriggins family, are you not?"

"No, sir. I'm a poor relation of the Spriggins family."—Chicago Tribune.

TAX REFORM DEPARTMENT.

(This department aims to give everybody's ideas about taxation (not tariff). Write your opinions briefly, and they will be published or discussed in their turn by the editor or a member of the Taxation Society. Address, "Taxation Society," this office or P. O. Box 88, Buffalo, N. Y.)

To American Farmers.

The old proverb runs, "Experience is a dear teacher, but fools will learn of no other." Few farmers are fools. Most of them have wisdom sufficient to profit by the experience of others, and to know that there is not an active working farmer in all this broad land of ours who has not cause to lament the hardness of the times. When farms will scarcely bring the cost of their improvements, and lands on which nature's choicest gifts have been lavished leave but a bare living after paying taxes, when farmers in Kansas burn corn for lack of coal, and coal miners in Pennsylvania are half starved for lack of opportunity to work and buy this very surplus of corn, it is evident that the old proverb is not without application.

There are other wrongs to be righted, other grievances to be redressed, but, as compared to our tax system, these are trifles. They are property of immense value, like some palatial hotel, or they find that some individual or corporation is making a great deal of money. Their first idea is, to tax the builder of the property, or the business of the corporation, on the principle that these should contribute to the state while they are making money. They see property of immense value, like some palatial hotel, or they find that some individual or corporation is making a great deal of money. Their first idea is, to tax the builder of the property, or the business of the corporation, on the principle that these should contribute to the state while they are making money.

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